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Message Text

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DRAFTED BY EUR:SOV:MDIXON:REH
APPROVED BY EB/OA - MHSTYLES
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P 201955Z MAY 76
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 123977

STADIS//////////////////

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAIR, UR, US

SUBJECT: PAN AM TICKETING PROBLEMS

REF: MOSCOW 7821 AND PREVIOUS

SUMMARY: DEPARTMENT APPRECIATES FULL AND TIMELY INFORMA-
TION PROVIDED BY EMBASSY RE AEROFLOT TICKETING PRACTICES.
US DELEGATION RAISED MATTER MAY 17 AT BEGINNING OF TALKS,
HAS MADE CLEAR OUR DISSATISFACTION WITH THESE ACTIVITIES
AND HAS ADVISED SOVIETS THAT MATTER WILL HAVE TO BE REMEDIED
BEFORE ANY POSITIVE MOVEMENT ON POOLING OR OTHER CIVAIR
ARRANGEMENTS ARE POSSIBLE. END SUMMARY

1. US CIVAIR DELEGATION CHAIRMAN STYLES BEGAN TALKS NOTING
THAT QUOTE CLOUD UNQUOTE HAD BEEN CASE OVER RECENT CIVAIR
ENDEAVORS BECAUSE OF AEROFLOT REFUSAL TO SELL CERTAIN
TICKETS FOR PAN AM FLIGHTS AND 0ECAUSE OF AEROFLOT THREAT
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TO LIMIT PAN AM CHARTERS IF NOT GIVEN SOME OF PAN AM'S

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CHARTER BUSINESS. STYLES EMPHASIZED A) THAT BOTH ACTIVITIES UNDERCUT PURPOSES BOTH SIDES WERE SUPPOSEDLY PURSUING, I.E., EQUITABLE BALANCE OF BENEFITS; B) THAT ABHORRENT TICKETING PRACTICES VIOLATED BOTH THE AIRLINE AND CIVIL AIR TRANSPORT AGREEMENTS; AND C) THAT THESE PROBLEMS WOULD

HAVE TO BE RESOLVED BEFORE ANY POSITIVE MOVEMENT COULD TAKE PLACE ON POOLING. STYLES POINTED OUT THAT ARTICLE 14 OF CIVIL AIR TRANSPORT AGREEMENT GIVES PASSENGER FREEDOM OF CHOICE RE AIRLINE, THAT PEOPLE INVOLVED HAD SPECIFIC REASONS TO USE INDIRECT SERVICES, AND THAT, WHILE US FAVORS TRAVEL ON AGREED ROUTES, WE WOULD STRONGLY RESIST ANY ATTEMPT TO FORCE TRAVEL ON SUCH ROUTES.

2. SAMORUKOV ATTEMPTED TO DOWNPLAY PROBLEMS, LABELLING THEM QUOTE MINOR UNQUOTE MATTERS TO BE WORKED OUT BY THE AIRLINES. HE STATED ITALIANS HAD COMPLAINED ABOUT AEROFLOT TICKETING PASSENGERS THROUGH ROME ON PAN AM AND CLAIMED AEROFLOT WAS ENCOURAGING DIRECT FLIGHT TRAVEL BECAUSE TO DO OTHERWISE WOULD BE TO WORK OUTSIDE THE FRAMEWORK OF THE PRESENT AGREEMENTS. HE ATTEMPTED TO RATIONALIZE THE LAST POINT BY SUGGESTING THAT ARTICLE I, WHICH REFERS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF AGREED ROUTES, IS PARAMOUNT TO SUCCEEDING ARTICLES.

3. US, OF COURSE, DOES NOT ACCEPT SOVIETS' EXPLANATION OR RATIONALE AND BOTH DELEGATIONS ARGUED QUESTION THE FIRST TWO DAYS OF CURRENT ROUND OF TALKS. WE HAVE PUT THE MATTER ASIDE FOR THE TIME BEING SO THAT WE CAN LEARN MORE ABOUT THE SUBSTANCE OF THE SOVIET THINKING ON POOLING. ALTHOUGH SOVIETS HAVE INDICATED UNWILLINGNESS TO FURTHER DOCUMENT OR CLARIFY FREEDOM OF CHOICE PRINCIPLE, US HAS MADE IT CLEAR THAT ANY FUTURE PROTOCOL MUST INCLUDE CLARIFICATION THAT ARTICLE 14 APPLIES TO NONAGREED ROUTES AS WELL AS TO AGREED ROUTES.

4. WE EXPECT TO DISCUSS CHARTER SITUATION MORE THOROUGHLY AT LATER DATE AS IT WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE PART OF SOVIET'S POOLING FORMULATION. REPORT RE STATUS OF OTHER ASPECTS OF TALKS FOLLOWS SEPTEL. HOWEVER, SOVDEL HAS CONFIDENTIAL

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BACKTRACKED ON POOLING GUIDELINES TENTATIVELY AGREED AT FIRST MEETING AND PROSPECTS SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME ON POOLING ARE DIM AT MOMENT. ROBINSON

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